

STATE CAPITOL
P.O. BOX 942849
SACRAMENTO, CA 94249-0014
(916) 319-2014
FAX (916) 319-2114

DISTRICT OFFICE
ELIHU HARRIS STATE BUILDING
1515 CLAY STREET, SUITE 2201
OAKLAND, CA 94612
(510) 286-1400
FAX (510) 286-1406

Assembly California Legislature



NANCY SKINNER
ASSEMBLYMEMBER, FOURTEENTH DISTRICT

COMMITTEES
CHAIR, NATURAL RESOURCES
APPROPRIATIONS
LOCAL GOVERNMENT
PUBLIC SAFETY
UTILITIES AND COMMERCE
SELECT COMMITTEE ON
RENEWABLE ENERGY

July 27, 2009

Ms. Hilda Solis
Secretary, U.S. Department of Labor
200 Constitution Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20210

Re: Request for meeting on Department of Labor review of California's Unemployment Insurance delays

Dear Secretary Solis:

My office has received a number of complaints from constituents recently laid off from their work about hardships they have endured as a result of delays in the receipt of their unemployment benefits. I write in concern that the furloughs of staff and judges at the California Unemployment Insurance Appeals Board (CUIAB) and Employment Development Department (EDD) may be contributing to further delays in the processing of unemployment insurance claims in California.

With judges and personnel now furloughed 3 days per month resources may not be sufficient to avoid a worsening of the time frames of responsiveness. Both EDD and the CUIAB recognize this implicitly in their requests to Governor Schwarzenegger to be exempted.

The purported reason for these furloughs—that they are necessary to close California's budget deficit-- is found in the Governor's Executive Order S-16-08 (December 19, 2008) and Executive Order S-13-09 (July 1, 2009). As CUIAB and EDD personnel are federally funded, I question whether these furloughs save the state money, and whether they are in compliance with federal guidelines.

The 2008-2009 fiscal year experienced a 29% increase in unemployment insurance cases. According to the CUIAB as of June 30, 2009, there were 81,750 unemployment cases pending. June was the twelfth straight month in which new cases exceeded closed cases. Californians who have lost their jobs deserve to receive their benefits in a timely manner.

I understand the Department of Labor will be conducting a week-long review of California's Unemployment Insurance appeals process from July 27 through July 31, 2009. I would like to meet with your office's representatives to ascertain what the state can do to improve our performance and reduce our backlog. It is my understanding that your team will be visiting the Office of Appeals located at the Oakland State Building where my district office is located on July 30, 2009. I am available to meet on that date and would be pleased to invite constituents and representatives to provide information and suggestions.

I am also available to meet at other times and locations. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nancy Skinner", is written over a light pink rectangular background.

Nancy Skinner

Assemblymember, 14th Assembly District